

INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
5th FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2009 - 3:00 P.M.

The International Bridge Commission met at the above place and date.

Item 1: Tanny Berg called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m. Those present were:

Tanny Berg, Chair – D-1 (Rep. Ann Morgan Lilly)
Mike Breitingner, D-7 (Rep. Steve Ortega)
Analisa Cordova, D-2 (Rep. Susie Byrd)
Jorge Salom, (Mayor John Cook)
Michelle Barron, D-4 (Rep. Melina Castro)
Angel F. Quintana, D-5 (Rep. Rachel Quintana)

ABSENT:

Saul Frank, D-8 (Rep. Beto O'Rourke)
Gerardo Camacho, D-3 (Rep. J. Alexandro Lozano)
VACANT, D-6 (Rep. Eddie Holguin)

OTHERS PRESENT

Ray Mendoza, International Bridges
Everett Esparza, Sun Metro
Josette Flores, City Attorney
Jorge Hernandez, Downtown business/property owner
Christopher Hernandez – son of Jorge Hernandez

Item 2:

Motion made by Ms Barron, seconded by Mr. Salom and carried to approve the minutes to the last meeting of January 20, 2009.

AYES: Mr. Berg, Mr. Breitingner, Ms. Cordova, Mr. Quintana

NAYS: None

Item 3: Discussion and Action on Bridge Management Report.

Item #A Monthly Traffic and Revenue Report

Mr. Ray Mendoza stated that this past January was the worst month for bridge traffic in the past twelve years. He passed out a graph handout to all members that shows traffic decrease. There is also a decrease in parking meter revenue.

Item #B: Update on Stanton and Santa Fe Improvement Projects

Mr. Ray Mendoza commented that the selection process for a public artist is continuing. Acquisition of all property is almost complete. Mr. Tanny Berg asked that if the canopy is included in all the projects going on at the bridges. Mr. Mendoza replied that yes it is included and that the budget has been reached. Mr. Tanny Berg asked about maintenance needed on the canopy. Mr. Mendoza replied that very little maintenance is needed. The canopy will start from Sixth Street to the boundary marker at the top of the bridge.

Mr. Tanny Berg asked about the time frame for completion. Mr. Ray Mendoza replied that there is no exact time frame, but the project will hopefully be completed by the end of the year. Mr. Berg asked if there is any interruption of service. Mr. Mendoza replied that no, there is no interruption of service at the bridges due to this project. Like the rehab of the bridges, work is done from 9 pm to 6 am at night. Mr. Berg asked if it was possible to arrange a visit by the commission to view the bridges. Ms. Josette Flores interjected that a visit is possible as long as it consists of no more than three or four commissioners at a time, so that there would be no quorum.

Item #C: Update on New Commuter POE Project

Mr. Ray Mendoza commented that phase 1 is going ahead and there is a study to recommend a location. Mr. Tanny Berg asked about the new bridge between Zaragoza and BOTA. It is being done in two phases – the study and the presidential permit.

Item #D: Update on Zaragoza POE Expansion Project

Mr. Ray Mendoza commented that they're in the process of selecting a consultant to prepare a master plan.

Item #E: Bi-National Bridges and Border Crossings Meeting, Divisadero, Chihuahua

Mr. Ray Mendoza stated that Mr. Said Larbi-Cherif is on his way today to the Bi-National Bridges and Border Crossings meeting with partners in Juarez. Mr. Tanny Berg commented that the Mexican MPO should be invited to commission meetings. Mr. Jorge Salom asked if there was a list of contacts from Mexico. Mr. Ray Mendoza replied that yes there is and he can create a list and send by email to commissioners. He also commented that the Bridge Commission agenda is sent to CBP, PD, Sun Metro, etc. Mr. Angel F. Quintana asked if those agencies send representatives to the meetings. Mr. Tanny Berg commented that rarely has anyone from Juarez attended the meetings; they need to be invited. Mr. Angel F. Quintana commented that board needs to encourage CBP to send a representative to attend the commission meetings. Mr. Tanny Berg agreed and suggested that perhaps someone from PR could attend like Rick Lopez, assistant to Roger Meyer. Mr. Ray Mendoza stated that was the conclusion of the Bridge Management Report. Mr. Tanny Berg summarized the report for everyone. Mr. Ray Mendoza presented a slide to show where the new canopies will be at the Paso Del Norte Bridge, where the canopy will be at the Stanton Bridge along with the new building and central office. Mr. Tanny Berg asked if lighting and signage is being incorporated. Mr. Mendoza replied that yes, all are included. Mr. Berg commented on having a major ribbon cutting for the opening of the new canopy.

Item 4: Discussion and Action on the GSA project at the Paso Del Norte Bridge.

Mr. Mike Breitinger commented on the GSA project – when lanes would be open and pedestrians back on Downtown streets. Mr. Tanny Berg commented that the city owes a debt of gratitude to GSA regarding the head house project and perhaps should send a letter of thanks. Ms. Josette Flores commented that the board cannot do that but can recommend to City Council to send letter of thanks to GSA and CBP. Mr. Mike Breitinger commented that there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony on March 21, 2009 and that the commission and CBP should be invited. Mr. Berg asked about when the total completion will be and Mr. Breitinger replied on March 26, 2009. He also

commented on entry back into the US from Mexico. Proper documentation will be needed. Part of the delay or wait time in returning to the US is by US citizens who don't have proper documentation. Mr. Ray Mendoza commented that the city is trying to help CBP get the word out about proper documentation. Mr. Tanny Berg commented that upon returning to the US you cannot just state "American" to CBP anymore. Mr. Breitingner stated that starting in June 2009 people returning to the US from Mexico will need to have proper documentation and they can also apply for a passport card.

Item 5: Discussion and Action on Potential Proposals for Shortening Wait Times at the Ports of Entry.

Mr. Tanny Berg asked how many lanes are open. Mr. Ray Mendoza replied that there are currently fourteen lanes open. Mr. Berg asked how many are manned –need to be sure that a lot of lanes are manned to shorten the wait times. Mr. Mendoza replied that there is currently an academy in process for more agents. Mr. Berg stated that the CBP knows that on the third to staff lanes appropriately. Mr. Mendoza stated that there are eleven vehicle lanes and eventually there will be twelve vehicle lanes. Discussion followed regarding attitude of CBP agents and problems with staffing at bridges in regard to shortening wait times.

Item 6: Discussion and Action on annual report recommendations to be presented by the Commission to Mayor and City Council

Motion made by Ms Cordova, seconded by Mr. Salom and carried to recommend a resolution to city council commending the federal work on reconstruction at the bridges.

AYES: Mr. Berg, Mr. Breitingner, Mr. Quintana, Ms. Barron

NAYS: None

Ms. Josette Flores stated that the presentation to city council on March 3 will need to be posted as a commission meeting if all commission members showed up as that would constitute a quorum.

Motion made by Ms Cordova, seconded by Mr. Salom and carried to recommend a resolution to city council commending the federal work on reconstruction at the bridges.

AYES: Mr. Berg, Mr. Breitingner, Mr. Quintana, Ms. Barron

NAYS: None

Motion made by Mr. Berg, seconded by Ms. Barron and carried to recommend that city council continue to support enhancement of bridges.

AYES: Mr. Salom, Mr. Breitingner, Mr. Quintana, Ms. Cordova

NAYS: None

Mr. Angel F. Quintana stated that perhaps the council should make an amendment to the ordinance to allow the bridge commission to make recommendations to City Council during the annual report.

Motion made by Mr. Quintana, seconded by Ms. Barron and carried to recommend that city council allow the commission to make annual report.

AYES: Mr. Salom, Mr. Breitingner, Mr. Bert, Ms. Cordova

NAYS: None

Mr. Angel F. Quintana asked if the commission should submit an amendment to the ordinance before the presentation of the annual report. Mr. Tanny Berg stated that it is not possible as it takes too long to get the item on the city council agenda. He also stated that the commission submit the change to the ordinance as soon as possible to allow the commission to make recommendations.

Item 7: Discussion and Action on 2009 Meeting Schedule

Discussion was tabled until the next commission meeting.

Item 8: Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Mr. Tanny Berg commented on the importance of serving on the Bridge Commission. He opened the floor to nominations for chair and vice-chair of the commission.

Motion made by Mr. Angel F. Quintana, seconded by Ms. Barron and carried to appoint Mr. Mike Breitingner as chair.

AYES: Mr. Salom, Mr. Berg, Ms. Cordova

NAYS: None

Motion made by Mr. Quintana, seconded by Ms. Barron and carried to appoint Mr. Jorge Salom as vice-chair.

AYES: Mr. Berg, Mr. Breitingner, Ms. Cordova

NAYS: None

Item 9: OPEN COMMENT PERIOD

There were no open comments.

Motion made by Ms Cordova, seconded by Mr. Salom and carried to adjourn the meeting.

AYES: Mr. Berg, Mr. Breitingner, Ms. Barron, Mr. Quintana

NAYS: None

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm.

Approved as to form:

_____ Secretary